

CURRICULUM JOURNAL

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NEWS NOTES

Southern Association Embarks on an Experimental Program. The Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges, through its recently created Commission on Curricular Problems and Research, has launched a plan of curriculum study designed to produce an educational program suited to adolescent boys and girls. The plan is proceeding on the assumption that the secondary school in modern industrial society has a special obligation to provide a suitable form of instruction for those pupils who cannot or will not adapt themselves to the demands of the present program of instruction. It is further assumed that an adequate program can best be developed through experimentation conducted in a wide variety of situations. By carrying on the study in this way it is thought that a program will be worked out in a manner that will insure practical results. Each participating school is expected to originate and work out its own experiment, receiving only as much supervision from the Commission as will give a general direction to the work and assure usable results. In a word, no curriculum will be imposed upon the schools by the Commission. On the contrary, the Commission hopes to encourage an experimental attitude toward curriculum problems among the schools of the Association.

The study is a cooperative undertaking in which both the secondary schools and colleges will share. Through its administrative channels the Commission has invited three schools from each state to participate in the study. Each state committee has notified the Commission of the schools in its state desiring to participate, or else it has informed the Commission that applications will be made in due time. A supervisor of the participating schools of each state has been selected from the state committee membership.

The machinery for inaugurating and carrying on the study had its beginning back in 1935 when the Southern Association, finding itself with no adequate setup for studying its problems, established a Commission on Curricular Problems and Research. The duties of the Commission are to study the administration of programs of study, the accrediting policies of the Association, and to encourage and stimulate experimentation.

The membership of the Commission was appointed in 1935 and the first meeting was held about a year later. After a survey of the problems proposed for study by the members of the Commission, it was decided to undertake "a cooperative study between high schools and colleges" for the purpose of develop-

ing an educational program suited to the needs of adolescents. This study was approved by the Association in 1936 and a plan of financing the Commission was set on foot.

The Commission has secured \$10,000 for an exploratory study of one year during which time the schools will plan their programs and the Commission will critically study them with a view to making a final selection of the schools to participate in the study. During this time conferences will also be held in each state to which school people engaged in the study will be invited. Through these conferences and the visitation of the coordinator the Commission hopes to help the schools in working out their programs. Dr. Frank C. Jenkins has been appointed coordinator for the Commission.

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The Michigan Study of the Secondary School Curriculum. The Michigan Department of Public Instruction is beginning this fall to carry forward a cooperative twelve-year program of curriculum study and revision in the public secondary schools of the state. Present plans indicate a division of the study into four segments: (1) a review of the potential contributions from previous and current studies throughout the United States, the maturing of plans for the twelve-year period, and the introduction of variant practices in many high schools (one year); (2) experimental trial and evaluation of the immediate results of variant practices (four years); (3) transfer and extension of practices of evident merit (four years); (4) summarization and appraisal

(three years). The first efforts of the staff will be devoted to the task of making the significant contributions of other studies available to Michigan teachers. With the experience of others as a background, it is proposed to establish demonstration centers throughout the state. In the development of these centers individual initiative and local leadership will be utilized as far as possible, with the central staff furnishing consultative and technical service. The central staff will also assist in setting up a program for the evaluation of immediate and deferred results of instruction. The General Education Board is giving financial assistance during the initial one-year period. Dr. Eugene B. Elliott, Superintendent of Public Instruction, has announced the appointment of J. C. Parker formerly curriculum director in Ft. Worth, Texas, as Director of the Secondary School Study. Working with him will be G. Robert Koopman, Coordinating Director of Curriculum.

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A New Report Card. Beginning with the school year 1937-38 the New Brunswick, New Jersey, public schools will use a new report card for grades three to six, inclusive. It is of the individual pupil type constructed for the sole purpose of information and education of parents of the school children. All suggestions indicating possibilities of promotion are delayed until the end of the term. Progress of each pupil is noted by U—meaning Unsatisfactory; N—Normal; and S—Superior. These symbols are used to specify detailed strengths and weaknesses in a report that con-

tains a psychological analysis of possible pupil strengths and weaknesses and includes the fields of social, physical, and mental developments. This new organization of the report card which is the second in the series is considered a fundamental step in progress toward the complete elimination of any form of written report card.

Curriculum Experiment in a Chicago High School. The Calumet High School in Chicago has embarked on a curricular experiment in which all subject divisions have been abandoned. The pupil works on a problem of his own choice which draws in material from all fields. The school day is divided into interest periods rather than subject periods. There is provision for work in fields that are of general interest as well as opportunity for intensive study in a special field of interest. One hundred and twenty freshmen were selected at random and were put into four groups, each in charge of a teacher who acts as an advisor. The experiment which was begun last year under the direction of John A. Bartky, the principal, was renewed this fall.

Colorado to Revise Secondary Course of Study. Inez Johnson Lewis, state superintendent of public instruction in Colorado, recently appointed a directing committee of four to plan a program for revision of the high school course of study in that state. Members of the committee are: A. C. Cross, state high school visitor, University of Colorado, Boulder; Alvin W. Schindler,

associate professor of education, Denver University; W. L. Wrinkle, director of the secondary school, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley; and J. Earl Davies, chairman, associate professor of education, Adams State Teachers College, Alamosa. The directing committee met August 27 to consider committee personnel and further procedures. Subject committee chairmen and other Colorado educators were invited to meet in Denver, October 2, to confer with the directing committee regarding curriculum needs of Colorado schools.

Elon College Works with Public Schools. Under the direction of Dean J. D. Messick, who is also head of the Department of Education, Elon College is this year assuming the leadership in the revising of the public school curriculum of Burlington and Alamance County Schools. Superintendent L. E. Spikes of the Burlington Schools and Professor George Beecher of Elon College are carrying on actual classroom work with about sixty teachers, emphasizing basic principles of teaching and integration. Work that is being progressively taught is brought to class and evaluated. Then supplementary ideas are brought out through class discussion and these are evaluated. A basis is being laid for a fully integrated program, but it is realized that the project may require at least five years for full completion.

Curriculum Seminar. Modesto Junior College as part of its 1937 spring extension program spon-

sored a course in Curriculum Reorganization for elementary and secondary-school teachers and parent-education leaders of central California. Under the leadership of Dwight C. Baker, college principal, who was instructor of the group, the course enjoyed an attendance of at least 100 enthusiastic educational workers at each of its meetings.

The course consisted of lectures, reports, panel discussions, debates, and projects; and covered most significant aspects of present trends in curriculum development, including designs for integrated units of a core curriculum. The course met for two hours each Monday evening for fifteen weeks. Only those who desired to carry the course for two semester units of credit were required to pay a registration fee—auditors were permitted to attend all meetings and participate in all activities entirely without charge. Latest books on the curriculum, as well as most recent periodical and published courses, formed the source of most course materials. Reports of California curricular experiments supplemented foundation reading.

Graduates Return for Help. Mississippi Delta State Teachers College graduates teaching near by visited the College for a day to consider teaching problems of both the elementary and the high schools. At the morning session elementary teachers observed both direct and unit teaching. In the afternoon, various phases of the teaching program were discussed under the leadership of Laurie Doolittle, Director, Elementary Demonstration

Schools. Visitors brought problems and asked questions concerning pupil needs, remedial work, inexpensive materials, and unit teaching. In the high school division emphasis was on problems growing out of participation in the Mississippi program for the improvement of instruction. Representative graduates led discussions on things learned in college that proved helpful and on needs felt for which graduates have not been adequately prepared. A. L. Chapman, Director, Secondary Demonstration Schools, led the discussion on experiences in using units of work on high school level. William H. Zeigel, Dean of Faculty, described plans for the summer curriculum laboratory at the College.

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Minnesota Considering Curriculum Revision. The Southeastern Division of the Minnesota Education Association is considering the problem of curriculum revision in the schools of this section of the state. Dr. H. B. Bruner, Teachers College, Columbia University, addressed the general meeting of the organization, Friday, October 22.

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Oakland Experimental Course in First-Year Algebra. An experimental course in first-year algebra has been introduced in Grade X, of the Oakland High School, Oakland, California, for the purpose of serving better the "average academic student" who is required to offer two years of mathematics to meet college entrance requirements. Points of emphasis in the course include the relation between the de-

velopment of mathematics and civilization, and application of mathematical principles to the solving of life problems. The eleven units of the course include: (1) numbers, their development and use; (2) geometric representation of number relationships through graphs; (3) developments of units of measure and their use; (4) construction of simple geometric figures and development of formulas; (5) simple equations and problem solving; (6) four fundamental processes of algebra; (7) algebraic solution of linear equations; (8) further study of solution of formulas; (9) special products; (10) continuance of geometric constructions and introduction of informal geometric proofs; (11) introduction to demonstrative geometry.

Public School and College Coordinate Efforts. A mutually valuable and challenging program is under way in the Elementary Public Schools of New Brunswick, New Jersey, and the Department of Elementary Education of Rutgers University. It came about because Professor Bixby wanted his Saturday morning students in extension courses to have a tangible basis for the principles of education which they were studying. Through arrangements made by Dean Partch and Superintendent Sickles the way was cleared for a series of Saturday morning demonstrations by teachers in the public schools. Teachers and principals of the six elementary schools were invited to cooperate on a purely voluntary basis. Four schools responded. During the present school year fourteen differ-

ent teachers have taught for observation purposes. The discussions that followed the lessons, participated in by teachers, their principals, and the class, proved so stimulating that the program, with minor adaptations, is expected to continue during this year.

Research Division Reorganized. The research division of the Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanics Institute is being strengthened by the addition of Dr. L. L. Jarvie to the staff as Chairman of the Educational Research Committee to take over the work previously done by Mark Ellingson who was made president of the Institute last fall. Dr. Jarvie, a graduate of Ohio State University, comes to the Institute from George Washington University. Mrs. Hazel P. Howland, also an Ohio State graduate, has been added to the staff to do research work in remedial reading and study techniques. Doctors Charters and Tyler will continue in consulting capacities. The major problems to be worked upon this year will be those related to the individualization of instruction and development of techniques of self-evaluation.

Survey of Student Activities in Colleges and Universities. Harold Hand directed a group of the elected student body officers at Stanford University in 1936-37 in making a twenty-one part survey of the "informal curriculum" in some 230 colleges and universities over the United States. The enterprises on which data were secured were (1) student government, (2) shap-

ing and controlling student conduct, (3) social life on the campus, (4) honor code, (5) guidance program, (6) men's athletics, (7) women's athletics, (8) dramatics, (9) forensics, (10) music activities, (11) self-help program, (12) religious life, (13) clubs and societies, (14) fraternities, sororities, and living groups, (15) newspaper, (16) annual, (17) magazines, (18) handbook, (19) financing student activities, (20) student-alumni relationships, and (21) student-faculty relationships. This survey supplied the foundation materials for a volume on *Student Activities in Colleges and Universities* which is to be published by McGraw-Hill in 1938. This project was the culmination of a seminar on problems of student leadership which was initiated by the Associated Students of Stanford University in the fall of 1936.

Teachers Continue Broad Planning. The Denver high schools were very fortunate during the past summer in having eight teachers and two directors in attendance at the Workshop Conference in Secondary Education at Sarah Lawrence College. These teachers have returned to the high schools in Denver with much enthusiasm about the techniques used at the Workshop for developing units for core courses. In each of the senior high schools there is a group of teachers working with the teacher or teachers from the building who spent the summer at the Workshop. Teachers are beginning to feel that they are working along lines that promise exceedingly fruitful results. There is general agreement that the pres-

ent procedure of widespread curriculum planning is superior to the usual procedure of writing courses of study, although that was useful in its time.

The Bucknell University Curriculum Library. Bucknell University inaugurated during the 1937 summer school a curriculum library for the benefit of persons interested in curriculum development. Workrooms are provided for persons interested in curriculum construction. The library has started off with a good supply of curriculum materials and the intention is to keep it growing steadily. The public was introduced to this project at a curriculum exhibit on July 14. This was the occasion of a conference on the High School Curriculum, at which Dr. P. W. L. Cox of New York University, Alan O. Dech, Curriculum Director for the State of Pennsylvania, and Dr. A. D. Thomas, Superintendent of Schools at Hazleton, Pennsylvania, were the principal speakers. Three sessions were held, the afternoon meeting including a panel discussion on Integration and the evening meeting being devoted to the Community High School. It is the purpose of the Department of Education of the University to provide assistance in curriculum construction to any school people requesting it.

Correction. The words "experimental learning" on pages 245 and 246 of the October, 1937, number should have read "experiential learning." This error occurred in an article by John J. Loftus entitled "The Activity Program in New York City."

SUMMER CURRICULUM CONFERENCES

By SAMUEL EVERETT
Northwestern University

The following brief reports describe curriculum conferences held in the United States during the summer of 1937. Conferences on such subjects as Progressive Education, Administration and Supervision, are not reported, though they dealt with some aspects of curriculum making. The items were for the most part sent in by the institutions listed below.

Progressive Education Workshop. The Progressive Education Association through its various commissions conducted a summer workshop directed by Mr. V. T. Thayer at Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York, during the six weeks' period of July 2 through August 13.

One hundred and twenty-six selected secondary school teachers from all sections of the United States participated. The only requirement was that participants have a definite curriculum problem to solve for which advice might be had from the Progressive Education Staff and coworkers in the conference. Such subject-matter fields as home economics, English, art, mathematics, science, and social studies were represented by groups of ten to twenty-five workers gathered together from the thirty schools in the Experiment on the Relation of School and College. Printed curriculum materials, evaluation tests, and source material from commissions and subject-

matter studies were made available to all workers by the staff of thirty-eight members.

The Progressive Education Association Commission on the Adolescent Study was represented by Miss Caroline B. Zachry and associates; the Human Relations Commission was directed by Miss Alice V. Keliher, and her coworkers; the Intercultural Relations Commission was represented by Mrs. Rachel Du Bois, its director, and the evaluation staff by Mr. Ralph Tyler of Ohio State University who was aided by his staff. All staff members were available for individual and group conferences. Mr. A. N. Zekiel, Ohio State University; Mr. M. L. Hartung, Ohio State University; Mr. S. P. McCutcheon, Ohio State University; Mr. V. D'Amico, Fieldston School, New York City; Miss E. Vassar, Committee on Adolescent Study; Miss I. Spafford, General College, University of Minnesota; Miss E. Miller, Merrill Palmer School, Detroit; Mr. L. E. Conrad, New Jersey State Teachers College, Montclair, New Jersey, served as discussion leaders of the various subject-matter groups.

In addition to pursuing individual problems, workers were interested in participating in general group discussions of the core curriculum reports made by various subject-matter commissions, criticisms of six books in tentative form to be

issued soon by the Human Relations study, the use of radio and movies in education and the common problems of the thirty schools experiment directed by Mr. Wilford Aikin.

University of Alabama. The 1937 Conference on the Curriculum was held at the University of Alabama beginning June 21 and ending June 24. Dr. Herbert B. Bruner, Teachers College, Columbia University, was invited guest leader. Emphasis was placed upon the present stages of development in the several counties and cities utilizing University consultant aid. Four counties, typical of the development, presented through local leaders what was termed curriculum clinics. These clinics required practically two hours during the afternoons of each of the four days, followed by a critical evaluation by Dr. Bruner.

Several hundred men and women spent the week attending the conference, with a still larger attendance from the summer school student body. Dr. Lotus D. Coffman, President of the University of Minnesota, delivered two general addresses: "American Youth in the Present National Scene," and "Education in Public Service." Dr. Bruner, beside assisting in numerous staff conferences, delivered a number of addresses having to do with curriculum construction.

Alabama College. Alabama College conducted a state Curriculum Conference during the week of June 28-July 2. The Conference was planned to serve the needs of the classroom teacher in the curriculum development program of the state. Leadership in this conference

was assumed by the following: Dr. Alice V. Keliher, Chairman Commission on Human Relations, Progressive Education Association, New York City; Mr. James S. Tipsett, Curriculum Consultant, Parker School District, Greenville, South Carolina; Dr. Henry Harap, Division of Surveys and Field Studies, George Peabody College, and state curriculum consultant for Alabama; Mr. C. B. Smith, Curriculum Director, Alabama State Department of Education; Dr. M. L. Orr, State Curriculum Advisory Committee, Alabama College; and Mr. A. C. Anderson, Secondary Education, Alabama College.

University of Arkansas. A three-day curriculum conference was again sponsored by the University in cooperation with the State Curriculum Program on July 6-8. The general theme of the program was "Introducing the New Curriculum." The three specific topics discussed were: "Problems of Introducing New Curriculum Practices in the Elementary School," "Problems of Evaluating Instructional Outcomes in the New Curriculum," and "Problems of Introducing the New Curriculum in Secondary Schools." Each topic was introduced by a conference speaker followed by panel discussions and by questions or general comments. The conference speakers were: H. B. Bruner, Teachers College, Columbia University; Mark Neville, John Burroughs School, St. Louis; and Samuel Everett, School of Education, Northwestern University. Other speakers included: W. E. Phipps, State Commissioner of Education, Arkansas; David W. Russell, National College of Edu-

cation, Evanston, Illinois; M. R. Owens, State Supervisor of Secondary Schools, Arkansas; Hal Baird, Francis W. Parker School, Chicago; O. T. Gooden, Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas; W. F. Hall, State Supervisor of Elementary Schools, Arkansas; and Charles H. Cross, University Training School, University of Arkansas.

Arkansas State Teachers College. In cooperation with the State Department of Education and the elementary division of the Arkansas Education Association, the Arkansas State Teachers College held a conference on June 10 and 11 and considered the problem of The Language Arts in the New Curriculum.

University of Mississippi. On July 1 and 2 the University of Mississippi held its third Annual Educational Conference. Emphasis was given to curriculum problems and the improvement of instruction. Addresses were given by the following: Dr. W. S. Guiler, Professor of Education, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio; Dr. Ralph E. Wager, Professor of Education, Emory University, Georgia; Leslie Kindred, University High School, University of Michigan; Miss Katherine Purcell, State Normal College, Oneonta, N. Y.; Miss Grace Bailey, Elementary Demonstration School, Louisiana State University; Miss Mabel Morris, State Teachers College, Kearney, Nebraska; Mrs. Mary Hutchinson, Mississippi State College for Women; J. S. Vandiver, State Superintendent of Education; Dr. John B. Wolfe, Head of Department of Psychology, University of Mississippi.

George Peabody College. George Peabody College for Teachers at Nashville, Tennessee, held its annual conference on Curriculum Improvement on July 6, 7, and 8. The theme of the conference was the Social Education of Teachers. Major speakers were Frank W. Baker, President of Wilwaukee State Teachers College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Boyd H. Bode, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio; George I. Sanchez, Julius Rosenwald Foundation, Chicago; and Paul R. Hanna, Stanford University, California.

Opening addresses were followed by panel discussions and by informal group discussion. Members of the George Peabody staff who participated in the program included acting President S. C. Garrison, H. L. Caswell, Henry Harap, George D. Strayer, Jr., Ullin W. Leavell, and A. E. Shearer. W. A. Bass, Commissioner of Education in Tennessee, and A. D. Holt, Executive Secretary of the Tennessee Education Association, as well as many teachers and administrators, took part in the conference. A feature of the program included reviews of the state curriculum programs in Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee.

University of Tennessee. A conference on curriculum problems was held in connection with the two regular summer courses in curriculum construction offered by S. E. Torsten Lund and Florence Essary. The following persons took part in the conference which lasted twenty days: Samuel Everett, Northwestern University; Sidney B. Hall, Virginia State Commissioner of Education; Henry C. Morrison,

University of Chicago; Hollis Caswell, George Peabody College; Frank Bass, State Curriculum Director; H. H. Walker, Division of Health Education, University of Tennessee. This series of conferences was planned as a part of the state program for the improvement of instruction.

Emory University. Under the leadership of the Georgia Program for the Improvement of Instruction there was held at Emory University a two-day institute, July 8 and 9, 1937, for the purpose of encouraging teachers to begin making actual changes in classroom procedure following two years of foundation study. There were two general meetings. At the first Dr. Thomas Alexander of New College spoke on "The Schools at Work on the Problems of Living." At the second, Principal Richard F. Little of Ellerbe School, North Carolina, spoke on "The Program at Work in Other Communities." In two discussion periods the total group was divided into four smaller groups for the study of the problems: "How to Begin a Program for the Improvement of Instruction," and "Collecting and Utilizing Materials in the New Program." Some 200 teachers attended the group meetings. The attendance on the general meetings was around 500.

Mercer University. A two-day Conference on Curriculum Problems, held under the auspices of the Georgia Program for the Improvement of Instruction, was in session on the Mercer campus, July 8 and 9, 1937. Addresses and group discussions were central features on the program. The central themes of the conference were:

"How to Begin a Local Program for the Improvement of Instruction," and "Collecting and Utilizing Materials in the New Programs." There were two general sessions, one on Thursday evening and one on Friday. Speakers at these general sessions were as follows: Dr. Willis A. Sutton, Superintendent, Atlanta Public Schools, "Schools at Work on the Problem of Living"; Superintendent L. P. Hollis, Parker School District, Greenville, South Carolina, "The Program at Work in Other States and Communities"; and Mr. L. M. Lester, Supervisor of Negro Education, Georgia State Department of Education, "Beginning a Program for the Improvement of Instruction in Negro Schools." Morning and afternoon discussion groups were held on the Mercer campus Friday, July 9, under the general themes stated above, for three groups, Primary, Upper Elementary, and Secondary. Group discussion leaders were: Miss Edna Simmons and Mrs. Margaret W. Boutelle, visiting members of the summer school faculty. Four other discussion group leaders, prominent in Georgia public school work, were Superintendent J. L. Yaden, Principal Julia Coleman, Miss Mary Brooks, and Mr. Homer Drake.

Piedmont College. In cooperation with the Georgia State program for the improvement of instruction, Piedmont College at Demorest, Georgia, sponsored a two-day Curriculum Institute on July 5 and 6, 1937. The principal address of the first evening was made by Ralph L. Ramsey, Secretary of the Georgia Education Association, on the subject, "Schools at Work on the Problems of Liv-

ing." The second day of the conference the general theme was, "How to Begin a Program for Improvement of Instruction." Miss Nettie Brogdon of New College, Columbia University; Miss Celia McCall from the State Department; Professors Manning, Stone and Blanks of the Piedmont Faculty took part in this discussion. Mr. Richard F. Little, Principal Ellerbe Community Schools, North Carolina, spoke at a general meeting. A visit to the Habersham County Materials Bureau at Clarkesville closed the program. Honorable M. E. Thompson, Director of Teacher Training for Georgia, took active part in the conference which was presided over by Dean Bailey M. Wade.

The University of Texas. The combined conference-credit course "Organization and Administration of the Public School Curriculum, with Special Reference to Installation," offered to superintendents, principals, supervisors, and teachers for the first time during the first term of summer school, was attended by 288 registered students and visitors and an average daily attendance of non-registered visitors of approximately 100. This course, which took the place of the usual summer curriculum conference, was organized by Dr. Fred C. Ayer, General Consultant to the Texas Curriculum Revision Program. It consisted of six units, one devoted to each of the five core areas of the Texas curriculum and one to the administrative problems involved in the installation of the revised curriculum.

The six units with their respective titles and principal instructors

follow: *First week, Language Arts:* J. Paul Leonard, College of William and Mary; W. A. Stigler, Co-Director of Curriculum, Texas State Department of Education. *Second week, Science and Mathematics:* Raleigh Schorling, University of Michigan; J. Murray Lee, Curriculum Director, Burbank, California. *Third week, General Organization:* J. Cayce Morrison, University of the State of New York; E. E. Oberholtzer, Superintendent Houston Public Schools; Fred C. Ayer, The University of Texas. *Fourth week, Home and Vocational Arts:* Victor J. Smith, Sul Ross, State Teachers College; Bess Heflin, The University of Texas. *Fifth week, Creative and Recreative Arts:* Sybil Browne, New Jersey State Teachers College; D. K. Brace, The University of Texas; James Houloose, Health Supervisor, Long Beach Public Schools; Elfreda Littlejohn, Kent State College. *Sixth week, Social Studies:* J. C. Parker, Fort Worth, Texas; George Freeland, State College, San Jose, California.

North Texas State Teachers College. The Seventh Annual Teacher-Training Conference was held at North Texas State Teachers College in Denton, Texas, June 10, 11, and 12. The conference consisted of general sessions and forum sessions. Basic problems in the fields of elementary education, social sciences, and science education were discussed by specialists in the particular field under consideration. Following the presentation a panel group analyzed the problem. Among the out-of-state persons who participated in the program were Mrs. May Hill Arbuthnot, of Western Reserve University, Cleveland,

Ohio; and Dr. H. A. Webb, of Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee. The purpose of the Conference was to assist the students in the College and the visitors at the Conference to keep in closer touch with the State Curriculum Program.

Baylor University. On June 4 and 5 Baylor University, cooperating with the State Department of Education in its revision program, conducted a curriculum conference for teachers, principals, supervisors, superintendents, and special workers in the public schools of central Texas. The conference was in the form of an open forum where previously announced vital curriculum problems and issues were discussed. The leaders were Ellsworth Collings, Dean of College of Education, University of Oklahoma; L. A. Wood, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; T. D. Brooks, Dean of Texas A. and M. College; W. A. Stigler, Director of State Revision Program; B. B. Cobb, Secretary - Treasurer of State Teachers Association; R. H. Brister, Superintendent of Waco Public Schools; superintendents and principals from other leading cities of Central Texas; and District Superintendent A. M. Tate with the county superintendents and supervisors of his respective district.

University of Illinois. Under the auspices of the Summer Session of the University of Illinois and with the cooperation of the Illinois High School Principals' Association, a conference on The Improvement of Instruction was held at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, on July 13-16, 1937. Addresses, panel discussions, group and general discussions were employed in present-

ing the conference program in which there was an emphasis both upon practicality and experimentation. The three evenings of the conference were devoted to general sessions, while the afternoons were given over to discussions in subject-matter groups. Among the speakers were Charles F. Arrowood of the University of Texas; President Frank E. Baker of the State Teachers College, Milwaukee; Dean Thomas E. Benner of the University of Illinois; S. M. Corey of the University of Wisconsin; Charles H. Judd of the University of Chicago; John Rufi of the University of Missouri; Raleigh Schorling of the University of Michigan; Othanel Smith of the University of Illinois; and Director Josef Wright of Radio Station WILL at the University of Illinois.

University of Oklahoma. The University of Oklahoma sponsored a state-wide curriculum conference at Norman on June 17 and 18. This was one of the special features of the summer session and drew largely from school systems in all parts of the state. The principal speakers were Henry Harap, George Peabody College, Nashville, and J. L. Meriam, University of California at Los Angeles. They addressed the three general sessions on topics of interest to teachers of all levels and in all departments. Two departmental sessions were held for teachers of English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. These were conducted by Oklahoma high school teachers and principals, were well attended, and stimulated much profitable discussion. The Oklahoma Teachers of Homemaking held their summer conference at

Norman just preceding these two days and the members stayed over for the curriculum conference.

University of California. A series of conferences relating to broader applications of the school curriculum was held at the University of California at Los Angeles in connection with the 1937 Summer Session. Four conferences were scheduled, under the general direction of Dr. Marvin L. Darsie, Dean of the Teachers College. On July 7, 8, and 9, the topic was "Street and Highway Safety, with Special Reference to Safety Education." Participants included Dr. Frank K. Foster, formerly of the United States Office of Education; Dr. Herbert J. Stack, Columbia University; Superintendent Verling Kersey, Los Angeles City Schools; and representatives from state departments of education and highway engineering.

On July 14, an official conference was held under the auspices of the Educational Policies Commission, with Dr. John A. Sexson, of Pasadena, and Dr. Charles B. Glenn, of Birmingham, Alabama, as the leaders. A special feature of the session was the presentation and round-table discussion of the report on "The Unique Function of Education in a Democracy." The session on July 21 was devoted to Problems of Adult Education, under the leadership of Dr. Walter R. Hepner, president of San Diego State College. This was followed by a two-day session led by Dr. Gertrude Laws, under the theme "Foundations for Personality Stability." The final session, on July 28, dealt with "Problems of Educational Pathology," with discus-

sion by members of the Summer Session staff, including Dr. Knight Dunlap, Dr. Grace M. Fernald, Dr. James Q. Holsopple, Dr. Marion Monroe, Dr. Forrest N. Anderson and Dr. Richard A. Bolt.

University of Idaho. The University of Idaho conducted a summer school conference on the curriculum beginning June 21, and lasting two weeks. This conference was planned to accommodate city and county school superintendents and both elementary and high school teachers. Out-of-state participants were: L. T. Hopkins, Columbia University; Reginald Bell, Stanford University; Dean Uhl and Edgar Draper, University of Washington; Hugh Woodward, Brigham Young University; Dean J. J. Oppenheimer, University of Louisville; Ella Probst, University of Minnesota; Mrs. Hazel Ott, director of curriculum research for F. E. Compton and Company; John Matzen, University of Nebraska; Karl Gehrken, Oberlin College; Mabelle Glenn, Kansas City, Missouri; and Myrtle Leonard, Metropolitan Opera singer.

Stanford University. The School of Education at Stanford University conducted a Summer Conference during the week of July 7-11 on the two themes "Mental and Physical Health," and "Curriculum Development." The general sessions of the conference were devoted to the problems of mental and physical health and forums, or group sessions, were given to mental health and personality development, general health and the school program, curriculum development, advanced general education and the program of the Educational Policies

Commission. A total of ninety forum sessions were held. Among those who participated in the program of the conference were Douglas A. Thom of the Tufts Medical School and lecturer in the Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts; A. J. S. Stoddard, Superintendent of Schools, Denver, Colorado; Clifford Brownell of Teachers College, Columbia University; Alvin C. Eurich, University of Minnesota; Donald T. Cottrell, Teachers College, Columbia University; Morris R. Cohen, College of the City of New York; Harold Benjamin, University of Colorado; Harl Douglass, University of North Carolina; Clyde M. Hill, Yale University. In addition, members of the faculty of Stanford University and prominent educational leaders from Pacific Coast States took part in the program.

University of Washington. The University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, conducted a conference of curriculum improvement during the week of July 12 to July 16. The conference was organized for the purpose of promoting the preliminary work in the State Curriculum Improvement Program, and

was planned so that teachers, supervisors, and administrators at all levels of the school system might profit from participation. Addresses and panel discussions on controversial issues were included in the conference procedure. Problems in the various subject-matter areas formed the basis of work for teachers in these areas during an entire week.

Some of the speakers were: Dr. R. E. Rutledge of the Oakland Public Schools; Dr. W. E. Armstrong of Mills College; Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer of Ohio State University; Dr. Ralph LaPorte, University of Southern California; Superintendent Worth McClure of the Seattle Public Schools; Superintendent Elmer Breckner, Tacoma Public Schools; President Robert McConnell, Central Washington College of Education; Dean W. L. Uhl, College of Education, University of Washington; W. R. Wilson, University of Washington; John T. Wahlquist, University of Utah; and H. B. King, Curriculum Adviser, Department of Education, Victoria, British Columbia. E. M. Draper of the faculty of the College of Education was the director of the conference.



VITAL ISSUES IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES

By DANIEL C. KNOWLTON
New York University

In characteristic whimsical vein Samuel E. Crothers in his essay "In the Hands of a Receiver" has pointed out how, just as in the business world receiverships are the only solution for highly involved financial situations, so too, in the realm of the mind and spirit such a stocktaking of one's assets and liabilities is equally imperative. Individuals no less than business enterprises are constantly getting into jams for which there is no adequate relief short of the declaration of a receivership. It not only affords the opportunity for a breathing spell and for a recognition of familiar landmarks, but allows for intellectual and moral refinancing and reorganization. Since 1929 the more modern practice has been to declare a moratorium. If Dr. Crothers were writing today he would probably advocate the extension of this practice to the sphere of the mind and spirit.

If this advice was pertinent when the essay was written a quarter century ago, it would appear to be even more applicable in the more complicated world of the third decade of the twentieth century. And nowhere more than in the field of education where the accumulation of books, pamphlets and articles has already forced a resort to educational indices, bibliographies and summaries for even the most superficial acquaintance with the thinking in a given area. School people

are more and more threatened with being engulfed in this very accumulation of material. Even though a closer examination reveals the fact that the ratio of ideas to items assembled is surprisingly small, unfortunately this condition is not appreciated by many of the rank and file to whom facts as such are the all-important consideration. The far-reaching claims made by this or that group to new areas rest upon a few outposts scattered here and there, all of them weakly held. The anxiety to reach out and possess new territory—to be the embodiment of the frontier spirit—transcends all efforts to define the occupied territory or to take actual possession of the same. It is no new trait of human nature which is being displayed, but it needs to be constantly emphasized, especially in confronting a situation such as the schools now face in shaping for themselves a satisfactory social studies program. They have never faced a more difficult task, and it has been made more difficult by the amount of confused thinking and crackpot schemes which have been launched, so many of which have failed to take into account the vital elements in the situation.

The recently completed survey by the Commission on the Social Studies of the American Historical Association — which threatens to run into something like sixteen volumes — has focussed attention

more or less upon these school subjects. The growing interest in this part of the school program is also reflected in the 1936 Yearbook of the National Council for the Social Studies and in the 1936 Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence. These two last-named attempts to analyze the problem illustrate in striking fashion the diversity in the points of view from which it has been approached. The growing volume of literature in this field and the type of manual and textbook published—which promise to rival the fifty-seven famous varieties—has tended rather to augment than to dispel the existing confusion in the thinking of administrators and teachers. Too often the solution accepted, in the form of a program adopted, rests primarily upon the faith of the administrator or teacher in the proponent of a given plan, or in the author of an existing text. They are less inclined to be guided by those principles of scientific curriculum-making so vigorously advocated only a few years ago. The answer to the riddle is being sought elsewhere.

The control of the situation and the leadership here appear to have passed largely out of the hands of the scientific curriculum maker and specialist into those of the philosopher-educator and the educational sociologist in spite of the fact that the recent survey was sponsored by the American Historical Association and the Commission itself consisted of various representatives of the guild of historians, economists and political scientists. Again, as in so many of the educational developments of the past quarter century, the pendulum has swung back and

forth from one extreme to the other. The anxiety for a precise—nay even a dogmatic solution—has often outrun a recognition of the vital issues involved. The new “emerging” order can no longer wait upon these slower procedures characteristic of the past. It is this very haste to move forward, anywhere—so long as we are conscious of movement—to get something on paper, combined with a desire to be rated “progressive,” that explains, in part at least, the present confusion of tongues. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the proponents of these various proposals to understand each other or to agree either upon a common point of departure or upon a common goal, to say nothing of the route to be followed.

Granting that the result desired will be attained by a variety of routes, there are certain conditioning factors that must be taken into account in any sound scheme of instruction. They seem to be just those factors that are more or less ignored or overlooked. The emphasis upon the desirability of an immediate solution of a specific condition, as against any comprehensive view of the problem of which the condition is a part, has often focussed the thinking upon a very circumscribed area and has handicapped decidedly the attainment of any satisfactory solution.

A mere glance at the developments of the past quarter century illustrates the applicability of the Crothers formula. Assuming that a longer time span is unnecessary in order to envisage the problem, a mere enumeration of the happenings which have followed each

other in rapid succession within the period points to the necessity for a pause and a re-thinking of the problem in terms of these developments. The reason for limiting the survey to the period since the first decade of the 1900's is that it was within this interval that there was injected into the situation a concept that from that day to this has never been adequately defined or explained—a concept which has permitted, if it has not encouraged, a variety of interpretations as to its meaning and pertinence — projected out of a background involving other significant and closely related issues. The concept to which we refer is that of a "social study" or the "social studies."

The recent survey to which reference has been made is sponsored by a Commission "on the Social Studies" which in its discussion of the subject area involved always refers to these as the "social sciences." Furthermore their report in many of its phases tends to identify the social mission or role of the school with the social studies program—if it does not actually place the burden for such a program upon the social studies teacher. Without attempting to read into these "studies" any particular definition or concept, and without attempting to settle this very vital question of whether the social mission of the school is not one transcending the limits of any social studies curriculum, it is worthy of note that no new program has been projected by the Commission. In fact they have been somewhat severely criticized in certain quarters for their failure to set up such a program. They have been content rather to set forth certain

fundamental issues such as those represented by "the climate of ideas" in which the school does its work; the relation of our present social order to a new order, which in their judgment, seems to lie just around the corner; and the desirability of a larger amount of emphasis upon actuality and reality in the work of the classroom. These are the foci about which much of their thinking centers.

Without minimizing the importance of these issues, a much simpler formula may with profit be applied to the situation. It is not a formula which, when applied, is likely to yield a precise program. On the other hand it certainly provides the key to an understanding of how the social studies may rationally be conceived, and the bases upon which any sound program must be constructed. How far the actual curricula formulated may resolve the situations reflected by, or associated with, these factors, which are the determinants of the situation, is quite another matter. Zealous reformers need to be reminded that the school is not the only potent agency in a democracy for preserving the democratic ideal or for building a new and a better social order; or to put it in another fashion, education itself is broader and more comprehensive than the school itself with all its ramifications. The sooner the intolerable burden which has been thrust upon the school for resolving all our social problems is removed, the better for the schools and for our social and political future.

The analysis proposed singles out one issue only in curriculum making, but one which appears to tran-

scend all others because it is so all-embracing and fundamental. It may be characterized as the issue of perspective. The nature and significance of this issue may be clarified by a somewhat closer study of the period under consideration.

There are many who, looking back upon the developments of this quarter century from 1910 to 1937, would insist that it has been marked by a decided acceleration in the tempo of change. On closer examination this may be more apparent than real. Certain external superficial conditions may have changed without involving far-reaching changes in the more fundamental aspects of life. On the other hand, as has been already pointed out, the mere succession of happenings within a comparatively short time span may, by their very number and frequency, give rise to what at first sight at least appears to be a highly complicated situation. As these sequences recur the situation seems to take on a more and more chaotic and involved aspect. This succession of happenings which has given rise to the present situation is too often neglected as a series of sequences. No effort is made to evaluate each as it appears or to appraise its ultimate contribution to, or effect upon, the situation under consideration. Hence the possibility of the comparison suggested by Dr. Crothers. The only way out is by way of a kind of receivership.

A superficial examination of the period just behind us reveals two nation-wide surveys of the whole field of secondary education, the one at the beginning, the other at the end of this twenty-five-year in-

terval. The first emphasized the need for a longer period of secondary school training and was accompanied by a reexamination of the nature, functions and program of the secondary school. It was this reorganization movement that launched the social studies concept. The more recent survey was a critical examination and appraisal of secondary education in the light of the growing demands upon it, and its success in meeting these. Both surveys gave rise to a voluminous literature dealing with secondary education in its many aspects. Incidentally, the report covering progress in curriculum making in the social studies revealed clearly the chaotic conditions existing there.¹

Meanwhile the social scientist was winning a well-deserved recognition but this recognition brought with it the implied demand that his analysis of the social scene should yield results comparable to those derived from the studies of the natural scientist. If the material aspects of life could be so profoundly modified as the result of the labors of the chemist, the physicist, and the biologist, why could not the social scientist too devise formulae and effect discoveries which would yield a better political and social order? In a world so thoroughly under the spell of scientific achievement the social sciences were more and more being subjected during this interval to the same utilitarian standards of proving their value as were the natural sciences.

¹Kimmel, W. G., *Instruction in the Social Studies*. Bulletin, 1932. No. 17. National Survey of Secondary Education. Monograph No. 21. Washington (Government Printing Office), 1933.

But this was not all. Developments within the fields themselves of such social sciences as sociology, political science and economics focussed attention more and more upon the contemporary scene to the exclusion of earlier conditions and problems. The methods used in studying man and his relationships were approximating more and more those of the statistician and the sociologist. Hypotheses were being projected and theories enunciated which were only partially validated or which were only applicable within narrowly restricted limits.

To make the situation more involved, within this same interval there was a growing tendency toward a synthesis of the various sciences concerned with man's life and activities paralleling a similar movement within the natural sciences. Each was looked upon as ministering to the other and the effort to make of each a kind of private preserve from which all outsiders were excluded was no longer characteristic of research in the field.

While these changes were taking place within the subjects themselves and in their relationships, one to the other, and this new conception of their function was taking shape, the world was rent by the cataclysm of the World War. Almost overnight the "will to victory" dominated every other consideration, diverting every one of these developments into new channels and giving rise to an entire shift of emphasis. Naturally the schools were among the first to react to these new conditions. There was a demand for more effective citizenship programs making for national solidarity in

the face of international crisis. There was an urge to enact new programs which should repair the omissions and weaknesses which war conditions seemed to accentuate. The needs of the moment seemed paramount. Emergency programs and emergency measures were characteristic of the period. To this day neither the schools nor the world at large have altogether recovered from the sudden dislocation of their normal course of development.

The reorganization movement in secondary education had barely gotten under way when the war broke out in Europe, and in less than three years time the United States had become a party thereto. The recommendations of the Committee on the Social Studies of the N. E. A. were still largely on paper when the United States threw in its lot with the Allied Powers. The actual curricula in operation as the storm burst represented practically the first comprehensive program which had been set up for the schools—and it was less than two decades old and was still in the process of change and modification.² The program was not only being extended to include a larger portion of the school life of the child but involved the selection of a wider range of materials drawn from a larger number of fields. The years 1909 and 1911 are marked by two significant reports setting forth these changes.³ Within the period

²The Committee of Seven, *Study of History in Schools: Report to the American Historical Association*. New York, 1899.

³The Committee of Eight, *Study of History in the Elementary Schools: Report to the American Historical Association*. New York, 1910.

A Committee of Five, *Study of History in Secondary Schools: a Report to the American Historical Association*. New York, 1911.

In 1911 the American Political Science Association launched its committee on the teaching of government, reporting in 1916.

from 1916 to 1936 two nation-wide movements for curricular revision in the social studies field were undertaken, that of the Committee on History and Education for Citizenship in the Schools, (a joint committee of the American Historical Association and the N. E. A.)⁴—to say nothing of the five-year survey sponsored by the Association. These are but a few of the pertinent happenings which might be cited which reveal the rapidity with which significant developments succeeded one another.

There is undoubtedly a vital relationship between all these happenings which cannot be ignored or minimized. An evaluation and interpretation of these relationships must be undertaken before any new method of curriculum making may be effectively utilized or any new program can really function. The need here is not so much for an hitherto undiscovered solvent — a new and sovereign remedy—but for a thoroughgoing diagnosis in which these elements are singled out and carefully studied. Program makers are no longer called upon to deal with the manifestations of a transient functional disturbance but with a condition which threatens to become chronic. No prescription can be expected to provide more than temporary relief which does not take into account the life history of the patient or recognize the stresses and strains to which he has been subjected.

⁴See *Historical Outlook*, Vol. XII, March, April, May, June, 1921, for its report.

We are but pleading for a rigid application of the historical method of approach to the problem. By re-assembling or reconstructing those happenings pertinent to the situation, in their time and sequential relationships, real light will be shed upon the problem. The elements in the situation will quickly emerge and may be readily subjected to analysis and appraisal. Such an approach will yield the much needed perspective upon the contemporary scene without which there seems to be little prospect of bringing order out of the existing chaos. Without such an effort, the passing years must inevitably bring with them further complications and a more involved situation. There is always the possibility of applying the "Gordian knot" solution but such attempts seldom effect more than a temporary result. Nor does the mere "counting of noses," upon which so much reliance seems to be placed in recent years, supply more than an indication of certain trends in the field. These trends, whether they be for good or ill, must also be examined in perspective if their significance is to be really apprehended. There never was a time when the schools needed to be recalled to the task of scientific curriculum making. The recognition of this vital issue of perspective is an important step in this direction.⁵

⁵Attention is also directed to the writer's contribution to the *Sixth Yearbook* (1936) of the National Council for the Social Studies for a more detailed presentation of various aspects of the problem. (Chapter I. *The Social Studies and Their Scope*.)

THE TEACHER, THE EXPERT, AND CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT

By AUBREY A. DOUGLAS
California State Department of Education

Most California teachers are a little tired of being "experted"; some are very tired of it, and some actively resent it. Rightly or wrongly, teachers believe that they are not totally lacking in intelligence—their college grades prove it! Pupils believe what they say. Many other persons have a high regard for the mental acumen of members of the teaching profession, especially college professors! Teachers have put thought and at least some study upon their courses and methods; they have, moreover, familiarized themselves with details in a manner the curriculum expert has not. They resent the assumption or the implication that most of the things they have been doing need redirection or that many should be given up for new things about which the expert has unquestioned information. They thus wonder if all knowledge is lodged in one place; they decide it is not. This is the attitude of many California teachers; it is a safe assumption that teachers elsewhere share their feelings.

The curriculum expert, whether a member of the administrative staff or from outside the school system, does not claim to know everything. His attitudes and actions, however, may belie his words. The number of opinions he renders, the variety of questions he resolves, and the amount of advice he gives do

not as a usual thing signify a modest man. Teachers realize the situation.

The curriculum expert subscribes to "democratic" principles in school administration. School administrators do likewise. Among other things, this probably means that in curriculum revision or improvement, issues and policies are placed before the teachers for their consideration and opinion. Perhaps it means also that the opinion of the group is the opinion which should prevail. Of course any member of the group, the curriculum expert included, is privileged to challenge, individually or collectively, the other members of the group. The one issuing the challenge knows he is right, and that the others are wrong. He often forgets that every other member of the group reserves to himself the privilege of believing the same thing about his own opinions. It may be a question of what to do under such circumstances. The expert regards himself, perhaps rightly, as being so far in advance in his thinking that he is often inclined to invoke authority and to say that, in the absence of group decision, the policy will be so and so. It may be that he can make such a decision at the moment, or get the administrative head of the schools to make it for him. What actually happens when he goes to his next job of ex-

perting, however, may be an entirely different story.

In civic affairs, questions or issues are placed before the people. These questions should be considered; often they are not. But the people ballot on the issue and the way they vote determines what is to be done. It is a slow process, but it is one we do not expect to give up. Perhaps this procedure is what teachers understand as democratic procedure; perhaps they expect that it will be used when an expert announces that a democratic plan will be followed in curriculum improvement.

Many curriculum experts and many administrators honestly subscribe to the principle or principles of democracy in curriculum making or in school administration, and unwittingly or unconsciously violate, in a wholesale manner, the tenets to which they vow allegiance. They honestly do not see that they are committing the violations. One is reminded of the mote and the beam. When the teachers realize the inconsistency—and one may rest assured that they do or will—the position of the expert or of the administrator is not strengthened hereby. It might have been better had nothing been said about democracy.

Individuals vary greatly in their ability to stimulate the best thinking of which teachers are capable. The more successful are possessed of a sense of fairness, willingness to give and take, ability to consider a remark objectively rather than personally, and a sense of humor that does not allow them to take themselves too seriously.

Those interested in drawing out the best that is in teachers will

guard against conscious or unconscious use of the discussion period as a means of fastening upon the group preconceived ideas or policies. That more than one group of teachers have been schooled to react in a manner agreeable to the leader, there is abundant evidence to prove. Knowing the curriculum expert, one may often predict the policies which will be adopted. This point should be stressed, because it is the very place at which most mistakes are made. The expert honestly desires to give teachers a voice in deciding problems and points of view, but he argues against all opposition. Because of his greater grasp of data and principles, or because of his greater power in debate, and because teachers recognize his position of authority, opposition is gradually stilled. There will be some, of course, who agree wholeheartedly with the expert. They join his side. This increases the illusion of a point of view democratically arrived at. But to call such a procedure democratic is to misapply the term. There will be teachers—perhaps those who have not been members of the innermost circle—who will not be deluded by appearances.

In an educational meeting, often regardless of topic, someone is likely to remark sagely that the method or process under discussion will work or the reform may be accomplished—provided the teachers who do the work are excellent teachers. Usually, such a remark meets approval. In other words, it is recognized that the school and its curriculum are as good as the teachers, and no better or worse. Another trite remark is to the effect that programs of curriculum revision are of value

because of the benefit teachers derive from them. All this surely means that teachers should be improved.

Application in educational procedures of the theory urged upon teachers for their classrooms means the cultivation of the teacher's individuality and personality, it means aid to them in gaining professional knowledge, and it means freedom in thought and expression. Many teachers do not speak their minds for fear of ridicule or of more drastic consequences. The situation is real, and not imaginary. In a meeting attended by several hundred teachers, from many school systems, remarks analogous to the above were recently made. They were challenged, especially by the administrators. The teachers were asked to express themselves. They voted, about four to one, that they were deterred from speaking freely on matters of curriculum policy because of fear of the consequences of disagreement.

The curriculum and the school are as good as the teachers. Unless the program of improvement or revision is understood and endorsed, little difference will appear in what goes on in the classrooms. To put the statement in a slightly different way, it may be said that a program of curriculum revision will be effective in so far as teachers, individually and collectively, make intelligent appropriation for their own use of that which has been recommended. In too many instances no change will be evident; in a few instances, teachers will be found who appropriate much of what has been recommended. Perhaps these gains are sufficient remuneration for the

time and money. It seems unfortunate, however, that improvement could not be greater. Rarely is it as much as the expert or the administrator fondly believes.

Many examples could be cited to support these contentions. In the first place, numerous investigations designed to arrive at content, method, and organization have appeared within the last fifteen years, some of which are extremely valuable. They have not brought about as much change in practice as they should. Three examples may be cited. The National Committee on Mathematics Requirements produced an excellent report; so did the committee which produced the Modern Foreign Language Study. These reports have been used by textbook writers, and thus have been a great help. They have not been extensively used by the rank and file. Perhaps a majority of classroom teachers, even those in mathematics and foreign language, do not know such investigations were ever made. Almost identical statements can be made of the values resulting from the White House Conference called by President Hoover. It seems that, with as much work as we have on curriculum, such investigations would be used. Perhaps the experts have become so tangled in their own web of theory that they themselves never read the reports; perhaps their inclination or desire to be independent thinkers does not permit them to treat too seriously previous work on the curriculum. Whatever the cause, references to past curriculum investigations in current, published courses of study are conspicuous by their absence. Many of

the investigations here referred to are of high excellence.

On numerous occasions individuals have acted as curriculum experts for an intensive period of study. The method has largely been given up because of its ineffectiveness. It has been supplanted by a procedure which attaches the expert to the school system for a period of time. Most observers agree that the second method produces better results. Even here there are many instances where the program never gripped the sympathetic interests of the teachers. Printed courses of study may have been worked out, the chief value of which turned out to be publicity for the consultant and the school system. When a wall of resentment is built around a large percentage of teachers, or when the interest of teachers is not gripped, results are poor. If teachers are so inadequately equipped professionally that they follow more or less blindly what has been laid out for them, some good will be done if a better course of study is placed in their hands. Thus we have a text with a workbook, and a teachers' manual to accompany it made as nearly fool-proof as possible.

The purpose of all this effort is to improve the curriculum, which is the heart of the school. In the process there is a place for the expert, provided he is a thorough student of the curriculum and provided further he is able to challenge teachers. It is not asked that he challenge those whose mental processes have hardened to the place where thinking becomes painful; on the other hand, it is asked that he be able to challenge more than the few

who would think anyway. If he is able to accomplish this it will in part be because he sincerely and honestly regards teachers as colleagues, and not as somewhat helpless and hopeless persons who must be instructed. Such an attitude will enable the expert to recognize the immediate needs of teachers, just as he advises them to recognize the immediate needs of their pupils. As slow as progress may appear to be, the expert must be willing to start where the teachers are in their professional outlook and development. Progress will be made as rapidly as teachers are able to move, and not much faster.

The expert must be willing to lay aside a preconceived idea of the form in which the curriculum is to be organized. In the first place he may not be right; in the second place, he will lose time in trying to convert the teachers; in the third place, teachers will attach more interest to their immediate problems; and in the fourth place, no one, unless it was Herbart, ever set up a scheme that came to be accepted over a period of years. Of course the expert must have a philosophy of education, and, of course, he should give much thought to the eventual organization which the curriculum will take. He should not keep these things to himself, but he should not hand them ready-made to a group of teachers. By no means should he cajole either teachers or himself into believing that the preordained plan was developed by teachers. When all is said and done curriculum organization will be an evolution, in which tried and tested educational princi-

ples will play a part of highest importance. Social and economic developments, which no one has been able to predict with accuracy, will also have a prominent influence.

The point of view here taken is that curriculum improvement (rather than reform or even reorganization) begins at home, with the immediate tasks confronting teachers. The expert is needed. If he is to exert the type of influence he should exert, it will be because he is a thorough student, and because he is able to apply to the problem of curriculum improvement the educational theory which he urges teachers to apply in their classrooms.

The local administrative unit should furnish from its own staff or from some outside source this type of leadership. In a similar manner the state should furnish leadership sufficient in quantity and quality to enable the various administrative units to understand and to profit from the work of the local units. Such data and principles as are soundly derived will, when applied, produce a certain amount of uniformity in practice. Aside from uniformity which practical situations demand, and which are to be regarded as temporary, this is all the uniformity which should prevail.



EXPERIMENTING WITH A CORE CURRICULUM

By NELL LAWLER
Canton, Mississippi, High School

The purpose of the experiment in the integration of learning in Canton, Mississippi, Junior High School was to make subject matter more meaningful and functional. An attempt was made to include socially significant materials, to provide learning situations that are interesting to boys and girls, and to challenge their best efforts.

Three teachers, working for five periods with one section of first-year pupils, inaugurated the integrated work program for 1935-1936. These teachers planned their work cooperatively, meeting and discussing all phases in detail before any new work was begun. When plans were perfected, the work was launched by the social science teacher. The work in English and mathematics was coordinated with social problems. When needed, the music teacher fitted her work into the plan.

Last year's program centered around two units: *Ethiopia, Her Friends and Enemies* and *Water Transportation and How It Has and Does Affect Us*. Each lasted about four and a half months. The time limit was not prearranged, for, although teacher guidance was not abandoned, student leads were followed. The units would have ended whenever the class was satisfied. The following is an account of the work that was done in connection with the first unit.

There were four distinct phases of this unit, one leading into the other so gradually that there was no break of continuity. These phases were the Ethiopian, the Italian, the English, and the French. Before launching the unit the teachers met and decided on certain general aims that would help to guide the work. These included: the learning of important geographical and historical facts; the understanding of the countries involved in the Ethiopian campaign; an appraisal of the foreign news dispatches; and so on.

The social science teacher introduced the Ethiopian question by discussing newspaper, magazine, and newsreel items. The class was asked to bring articles and pictures which they could find relative to this subject. Stimulated by these, the class was asked to list on the board the things they would like to know about Ethiopia. From these questions the work for two weeks was outlined. The librarian supplied the bibliography for the study, reference books were brought in, and current material was supplied. All of this work was carried on in the social science class. The oral themes in the English class were related to the main topic.

The Italian phase grew out of demands to know about Ethiopia's enemy. The same procedure was followed, the social science class de-

ciding what they would like to know about Italy. The teacher guided the work and supplied the materials. Besides the reading and discussion, the class made peep boxes of Italian scenes, accordion books on Italian life, and maps showing various geographic facts. In arithmetic, problems were solved concerning distances between points in Italy and Ethiopia, England, and the Suez Canal; problems in exchange of money and in comparison of population and size of the two armies. The music teacher developed an appreciation of the Italian contributions to music. In English, class letters were written telling of an imaginary trip to Italy. One day the teacher told the class of her visit to Italy; another, selections were read from *Macaroni Ballads*, poems telling of the Italian's love for his country. At the conclusion of the division on Italy, it was decided to have a workday program and to invite a few friends and grade mothers to visit the class. The invitations were written in the English class. The subjects for the program were selected in the social science class, prepared in the English class, and delivered in the social science class.

The class was intensely interested in the work. Day by day they put thumbtacks in a large map of Ethiopia at the points where the battle had occurred. Articles were brought to their attention concerning both sides of the question in an effort to help the pupils to discriminate between propaganda and news. That, however, was a tremendously difficult problem.

After the workday program the teachers met to discuss when the unit should end. It was concluded that there were questions to which the class demanded answers, and that it must be continued until these were discussed. Consequently, the English phase of the unit was planned to answer such questions as: Why has England sent so many ships to the Mediterranean? Why is England standing in the League against Italy? And many more that had grown out of their reading. The English phase developed into the largest section of the entire unit. First, the social science teacher taught the significant geographic facts concerning the island. Then, beginning with a brief review of the early history of the period, the work in geography and history continued to modern England. The work in the English class was, of course, easily integrated. The Industrial Revolution was attacked in social science and letters in the English class were written from apprentices to their home folks, from manor ladies to their friends, from factory workers to their farm relations. In every instance written themes were on subjects suggested by the social science teacher and worked out in the English class. When themes showed poor sentence structure, drill was given on writing complete sentences.

The arithmetic class followed the work closely. Graphs showing comparisons of exports and imports were made. Problems based on distances and exchange of money were solved. It was found that arithmetic contributed much to the unit.

When the English phase was completed, an overview of it was given in the form of an original pageant entitled *Miss Britain Looks Back*. In the social science class the pupils chose the part they wished to present in the pageant. Facts concerning the part each was to take were discussed in this class. The presentation of the facts was prepared in the English and arithmetic classes.

The French section of the unit developed as a result of France's relation to the Ethiopian War. In many instances the history of France was closely associated with England's, and the English colonial possessions were often involved with the French. The French phase of the unit proved to be a particularly interesting one for the music class. The pupils were interested in studying the music of the different historical periods. It was felt that the music section of the unit contributed greatly in helping the class to feel the spirit of the people.

The work seemed stimulating, vital, and interesting to all the teachers. It was satisfying to dis-

cover that the class learned many more facts by this method of teaching than by the strict adherence to the textbook. The pupils showed unusual interest in the work. They wanted to talk about it when they met the teachers on the campus. Almost daily they brought pictures or articles they had cut out of periodicals.

The first few times that the arithmetic and English assignments were on social science subjects, the class appeared to be amused. As time went on they realized that the work of the several subjects had a new coherence which became meaningful. They readily saw the relation of language and mathematics to current social and political problems.

The work done so far cannot be compared with a perfected plan, for Canton's program is in its first stage of development. The above account shows weaknesses and imperfections that have developed because of lack of experience. The group is satisfied, however, that a start has been made toward curriculum improvement.



COUNTY SCHOOLS ATTACK COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

By JANE FRANSETH

Demonstration Supervisor, South Georgia Teachers College

In the fall of 1936 a definitely planned program was started to improve instruction in schools of Bulloch County, Georgia. The object was to revitalize the curriculum so that the children might become better prepared to cope with the persistent problems of life. These were stated as follows: (1) Maintaining physical, mental, and emotional health. (2) Earning an adequate living. (3) Performing the responsibilities of good citizenship in the home, community, the state, the nation, and with other nations. (4) Utilizing and controlling the natural environment for individual and social needs. (5) Receiving and transmitting ideas. (6) Expressing aesthetic and spiritual impulses.

A study of conditions in Bulloch County was made by representative teachers, principals and the county superintendent, under the direction of a supervisor from South Georgia Teachers College. This study was made for the purpose of analyzing the progress that had been made in organizing the curriculum to fit the needs of the people so that plans for the future might be made in light of present and future needs.

This study revealed many important facts. Bulloch County is a rural area. Cotton is the chief cash crop, though tobacco, poultry and other livestock are becoming important. Turpentine industry furnishes labor for many of the people.

Further analysis showed that not many people were taking advantage of the many natural resources. Vegetables of many kinds can be grown the year around, livestock including hogs, cattle, and poultry can be grown with profit. Nearness to the sea, the mild climate, soil that can be made productive of pine timber are assets that have not yet been fully capitalized. Dilapidated conditions of hundreds of homes were visible illustrations of inadequate incomes.

Dental inspection revealed that sixty-three per cent of the children in the schools had defective teeth. It was found that sixty per cent of the children were infected with hookworm disease. This condition was an underlying cause of anemia, heart complications, and other diseases to which children become susceptible when suffering from hookworm. Malaria fever was found to be a constant drag on the vitality of its many victims. Bad physical health was undoubtedly the underlying cause of many problems in mental and emotional health manifesting themselves in excessive drinking, family feuds, and general lack of trust in fellow men.

The study showed inadequate channels for satisfactory expression of aesthetic and spiritual impulses. Many people expressed their spiritual impulses through church services on Sunday, but not

a great many could appreciate beauty in art, music, literature, friendship, or nature.

The greatest amount of dishonesty prevailed in connection with responsibilities of citizenship. The best man for an office was not the determining factor, we found, at election time. The person who was able to buy the most votes, either with money or liquor, was the winner.

As the teachers began studying the social problems of Bulloch County, the children did likewise. As soon as the dentists had examined the teeth, the children in the county began through their health classes to analyze their own conditions. They computed the per cent of children with decayed teeth in their rooms, in their school, and in the county. They began to plan ways to get to the dentist for corrections. Original posters, compositions, plays, appeared on prevention of dental problems. In December a check was made on the number of children who had had their teeth corrected in the entire county. It was found that the original sixty-three per cent of children with decayed teeth had been reduced to fifty per cent. It is expected that another twenty-five per cent will visit the dentist for corrections before the end of the year.

As the children studied the kind of diet that was conducive to good teeth and general health, they became interested in the improvement of their lunch periods. At the beginning of the year, no room conducted an organized lunch period. Almost no children washed their hands before eating lunch. The usual procedure was to run up and

down the hall or playground eating biscuits or syrup sandwiches. Now at least sixty-five per cent of the rooms have well organized lunch periods. Washing facilities, though not yet adequate, have been made available. Many children who once brought no lunch, or ate it at recess, now make every effort to become participants in the daily luncheon. In some schools plans are under way for hot lunches.

In their study of health programs, the children in Bulloch County have become extremely concerned about the fact that sixty per cent of them have hookworm infection. In one school the per cent of infection is as high as eighty-three per cent and in no school is it less than forty-six per cent. At the beginning of the year few children knew anything about the hookworm or its effects on human life. Now almost all know its life cycle and its effects on health. They understand that hookworm treatment provided by the state will help to stamp out the disease, but that sanitary facilities furnish the only permanent form of eradication.

Through the inauguration of the departments of agriculture and home economics, an attack is being made on the wise use of natural resources. All schools are making some attempts to provide children with experiences that will make them better able to understand the environment in which they live. In the lower grades the approach to the problems of wise use of natural environment and the earning of an adequate living comes through the social and natural sciences. Many evidences of experiences in the field

of industrial arts are also noticeable in all schools.

Evidences of results in a better understanding of the natural environment and guidance in scientific agriculture can be found in the home projects of the boys. Many boys have purchased livestock of their own of the best they could afford and are caring for it under the direction of the agriculture teachers. Some are making plans to raise some cash crops and some subsidiary crops under the guidance of the schools. Soil conservation is being studied. Home improvement is becoming an important topic of discussion.

Attempts are being made to help children use reading as a tool for getting ideas to help them meet problems. The procedure of having children merely take their turns in

oral reading from pages previously assigned is becoming less common. To find out how our people live and why, how life in distant lands differs from ours, how to build a bookcase for the room, what to feed a hog—all furnish the motivating power to wide reading. As visitors enter the schoolrooms, children are becoming more adept at explaining their work and accomplishments. All of these are hopeful signs that children will be better able to communicate as well as receive ideas.

A casual visitor in the schools of Bulloch County would probably not see the changes that have taken place; so much still needs to be done. Careful observation should reveal the beginning of a serious attempt to provide a curriculum that will help children to cope with the persistent problems of life.



SHORT ARTICLES

STATUS OF CONSUMER EDUCATION

By B. J. RIVETT

Northwestern High School, Detroit

A definition of terms is always desirable to promote clearness and to avoid misunderstanding. High school instruction to aid the consumer in buying goods has been given in certain subjects for many years, but recently the term, consumer education, has appeared more often in educational literature. In this paper, it is understood as instruction, the object of which is to teach the wise purchase of all things which every person buys, such as food, clothing, furniture, household appliances, automobiles, insurance, and investments. As one writer has said, consumer education should also result in a higher standard of living.

The aim of this study is to determine the present status and trends of the subject in North Central Association secondary schools, both as a separate course and as a unit in other school subjects. Another aim is to learn the attitude of the public. Do community organizations urge its teaching and is there any opposition on the part of retail merchants or manufacturers?

Why should the subject of consumer education be added or included in the secondary school curriculum? The best answer is contained in Briggs' Golden Rule of Education, namely, "The first duty of the school is to teach pupils to do

better the desirable things that they are likely to do anyway." If this view is accepted, the secondary school should teach young people how to buy wisely because spending money is something which everyone must do.

In making this particular study the following procedure was followed: (1) Recent articles in educational magazines were read. A list of them is given in the bibliography. (2) Some of the modern textbooks in home economics, chemistry, commercial subjects, and economics were analyzed to determine the percentage devoted to consumer education. (3) Interviews were conducted with the two supervisors of home economics in the Detroit public schools, with teachers who are experimenting with new courses, and with teachers of adult consumer education classes. (4) Letters were sent to schools that have been experimenting with this subject and a questionnaire was sent to 318 secondary schools in the North Central Association. These schools are in twenty states and include schools of all sizes from small rural towns to such large cities as Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Detroit.

At the 1934 University of Chicago Conference on Business Education, Hazel Kyrk of the Department of Home Economics read a paper on the subject, "Types of Information Available to the Consumer." In this she discussed five types of information available and

concluded that "most information available for aid in buying has to do with what goods are available and the desirable characteristics of goods." She said further that if consumers are to have the information they need, "every field of knowledge has a contribution to make to this means of raising the standard of living." James L. Palmer, Professor of Marketing, recommended "courses in which the student learns how, when, where, and upon what to spend money." Leonard V. Koos of the College of Education reported on Consumer Education in the Secondary Schools. His evidence was based on two studies, one a Master's dissertation by Richard Niehoff, on the analysis of textbooks on social studies and the second analyses of textbooks in general business, home economics, mathematics, geography, and science. The first showed little recognition of consumer education in social studies and in the second, "the extent of recognition of consumer interests is meager." He concludes that "this important aspect of education is in need of vigorous expansion." At the same conference, Henry Harap of George Peabody College, who has done much thinking and work in this field, presented a paper on "Practical Method in Consumer Education in the Schools." He said at that time he knew of no more than two dozen courses in consumption.

An incomplete analysis of recent textbooks reveals an increase in the space devoted to consumer education. Zu Tavern and Bullock's *The Business of Life*, a commercial textbook, has thirty per cent of its contents devoted to buying. In

Wilson's *Descriptive Chemistry*, a half year subject, twenty-five per cent of the pages is instruction in the composition and injurious effects of cosmetics, hair dyes, patent medicines, and similar topics. Home economics, a twelfth grade course in economics as applied to the home and taught in Detroit, is almost entirely a course in consumer education.

Only eighteen out of 158 schools in twenty states report a special course in consumer education. One hundred twenty-four schools teach units in home economics with a median of twenty clock hours instruction per semester. Over half report teaching of units in economics and commercial subjects. From one-third to one-fourth of the schools teach units in chemistry, agriculture, and health education. The median number of clock hours in all subjects is fourteen. Nearly all of the schools (137) believe that the school's offerings should be increased. Forty schools, or about one-fourth, plan to add additional units or courses. Few schools have tried both plans of organization, that is, as a separate subject and as units in other subjects. Nearly one-fourth of the schools state that local organizations have shown an interest in consumer education. Only seven schools report opposition to teaching the subject and these were from Chambers of Commerce and drug stores. The drug stores oppose instruction because it decreases the sale of patent medicine. One principal in a suburb of a large city writes that the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce seemed to be more interested

in where people should trade rather than how wisely.

The arguments against a special course are as follows: (1) it reaches too few pupils; (2) small schools do not have enough pupils to form a class; (3) a special course lacks integration and motivation because all situations would lack connections with real problems. On the other hand, Hiram, Ohio, and Lodi, California, report very successful special courses. Little Rock, Arkansas, states that a special course "gives a better chance to teach material in full form rather than condensing it."

There is abundant evidence that the teaching of units in subjects such as home economics and agriculture may be made effective because it correlates with life situations. Wise buying of food and clothing is an important part of the course in home economics. Proper feed for farm livestock at the lowest cost is an essential part of the instruction in agriculture.

A survey of the letters from 158 schools indicates that there is an increasing interest in the importance of the subject, that it is taught chiefly as units in other subjects, that there is considerable interest manifested by local groups and that there is little opposition. A complete study of the teaching of consumer education in the high school would require an extensive analysis of recent textbooks, of educational magazines, and replies from a large number of schools. However, this superficial investigation does indicate that there is a decided demand for more instruction. More emphasis on wise buying will be taught in home economics, economics, chem-

istry, commercial subjects, health education, agriculture, and consumer mathematics. Some schools will want to experiment with a special course in the subject.

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WHAT IS THE UNIT?

By BENJAMIN R. SHOWALTER
Alabama Polytechnic Institute

In this day of much talk about "units" it may be well to stop for a moment to clarify the meaning of the term and to rid it of some of the misinterpretations that seem to be clustering about it. Of formal definitions writ in elegant pedagogical parlance there are plenty. There are so many classifications and elaborations of the term in practice that the classroom teacher is in danger of getting lost.

Recourse to the dictionary helps us only a little. In the educational unit we are not concerned with "a distinct part or member analyzable in an aggregate or whole." It is a certain unity that we are seeking rather than a unit-ness, whether this be in learnings or in experiences. Our interest in the unit grows out of the realization that discrete learnings, that unrelated acquisitions, must give way to related patterns of learnings which have significance because they form part of a larger whole. Our concern with the unit, then, grows out of our desire to find some more effective method of securing for children learnings which will be functional because they are related to some central unifying principle or center.

An examination of units developed by teachers and even recom-

mended by course of study committees indicates considerable looseness of thinking. In a unit dealing with forest conservation we find poems, paintings, and songs dealing with trees, and even biographies of those who wrote or painted or sang about trees. Mathematics appears, of course, and so do other materials torn from other fields, not because they are essential to a study of the problem of forest conservation, but because an ingenious teacher saw how the problem offered an excuse for including them. After concluding a unit in the elementary grades a young teacher was heard lamenting the fact that she had not thought in time of a very clever way in which she could have worked some arithmetic into the unit. Such ways of doing and thinking do violence to the basic concept involved in the unit.

The essential feature of the unit, whether it be of learning or of experience, is that it possesses unity because of some central purpose, problem, or interest which is strong enough to impel a child or a group of children to seek a satisfactory answer or solution. Everything which is actually germane to the solution of the problem is legitimate material for use in its solution. Anything which is not actually needed, if used, does violence to the unity—and significance—of the experience. Corot's "The Dance of the Nymphs" is beautiful and worthy of study in its own right, but does it have any essential contribution to make to the problem of forest conservation? Arithmetic is an important skill, but what legitimate role does it have to perform

in the study of the birds of the community?

We like to refer to life situations by way of justification of what we do in the classroom. What do we do in life when we are faced by a real problem? Do we not attempt to isolate it, to simplify it, to reduce it to its fewest essential elements so that we can deal with it efficiently? If we want to wire a house do we go back to the cave man and come down through the ages studying the different means of illumination in the successive periods? Such an approach might be made by a designer of electric light fixtures, but it would not be ours. Our purpose would unify our activity and be used as a selective agency both inclusively and exclusively. Should not this same procedure actuate us in our work in the classroom?

The application of this type of selective procedure to the use of units in the classroom would do much to relieve us of some of the peculiar excesses which sometimes characterize unit work. One suspects that the practices under criticism are but our old friend "correlation" masquerading in new garb. They indicate a far greater faith in subject matter than those who practice them would admit. Yet is this faith in subject matter wholly misplaced?

Subject matter is important. It is, after all, the experiences which men and women have had in the past in dealing with their persistent problems. Its preservation and handing on are essential. And children know it. They are interested in the exploration of the physical and social environment, and the culture of which they are a part. They

want to study the persisting problems of the race." All of this can be done only through the use of subject matter which is introduced only as it is needed.

Two factors seem to be involved in the wise use of units: the existence of a significant problem or purpose strong enough to evoke persistent effort to arrive at a solution; the avoidance of beguiling side issues which may be related to the problem but do not actually contribute to its solution. It is this second factor which seems to be in danger of being violated, especially as we seek to set up a core curriculum. The danger is not so serious when the unit method is applied to subjects, such as history, geography, science, or literature in the more advanced grades. In these areas of experience the emergence of a problem calls for the use of only those data from other fields which are germane to the problem. The temptation to go far afield is not so great. In the core curriculum, of the lower grades especially, the temptation seems almost overwhelming in its strength if materials recently developed are significant.

As a palliative for this temptation there can be suggested nothing more effective than a sound interpretation of the meaning of the term "unit" as it is applied to educational procedure. Unless this is done there is danger that school work will degenerate into a meaningless, essentially unrelated welter of activity characterized by a spurious centrality which is no more effective than the old subject matter recitation. This is an issue which deserves careful consideration by

those who are concerned with the problem of the curriculum.

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A NOTE ON ART EDUCATION

By GARRETT HYNSON

The Park School, Baltimore, Maryland

For three years I have been thinking with different groups of students about art. We used to think that we were thinking about a field of history. Then we thought art history begins today. Next we felt art to be a matter of technique and that our learning could best be based on an understanding of the rules of making. Right now we feel that art study begins most naturally with an examination of one's own equipment of experiences, beliefs, concepts, and other baggage that relates to art. We always seemed to come back to this point whether we began with history, modern society, or technique. We now begin with ourselves.

I used the word baggage. It seems to fit, for this so-called equipment of ours is ponderous, troublesome, and a large part of it we can't find use for. Some of the students use art materials, but without connecting their own performances with what they are accustomed to call *art*. Someone always knows that Rembrandt was a great *painter* and that his paintings are *beautiful*. As a matter of fact, this is about all the students have to go on. The chief value of the word *beauty* seems to lie in its vagueness and romance. A picture is liked according to the frequency with which the name of the painter has been heard or read. When we consider this, it seems that usually the word

beauty is the equivalent of "I like it" or "It must be good because so many people think it is." The amateur uses the word *beauty* to camouflage either his own feelings or the current social fashion. It does not take much looking at pictures to bring us to this point of having the props knocked out from under us. Beginning with ourselves we get into a quandary. We *had* a vocabulary, and we need a new one.

How will we get words when we find we have not anything to say? We seem to have no tools for our study. We take stock. We have pictures to look at. It seems best to start with the pictures now and equip ourselves as we go along. Pictures involve visual experience. They are very confusing, for they all seem to look different. We started out thinking that we could look *for* certain things in paintings. The only thing we knew to look for was beauty, and now we are not sure what that is. Can it be that we will find the things to look *for* by looking *at*? Observation seems to be our best bet. We will look and we will note what we see. Perhaps we will all be able to agree about *observation*. We couldn't about *beauty*.

I see a painting. It is on canvas. It is done with oil paints. It seems very easy to start. The trouble is that there are simple implications that one forgets. A canvas is a plane surface. Oil paints are called pigments, and pigments have color. We seem to be involved in geometry, physics and chemistry. Very few of us think of *art* as having anything to do with science. Right here you can well see that we get off the track. Bill always thought that

artists were "queer" and he has heard a lot about "geniuses." Something must be wrong. Perhaps we had better wait a while before we try to answer this new question. We are still looking at the oil painting on canvas. We find lines in the picture, and something that some call perspective, because they think that the picture does not look flat even though it is on a plane surface. We are in a mess! Bill says, "I've got to study perspective." Dorothy has to know what color is. Jim thinks just lines look like quite a problem, and Marjorie says that she just cannot get herself straight about artists themselves. She wants to read about an artist, so I say, "Have you read Murger's *Bohemian Life*?" And I lend it to her on the spot. Dorothy gets a color wheel and disks. Bill has to consult the mathematics teacher, and Jim figures that he will look through my reproductions and try to make a catalogue of different types of lines. For the time being we decide that class will have to be a matter of individual study and conferences, but that we should all like to go to an artist's studio to see art on its own stamping ground. No one needs an assignment. Each has made his own.

Pictures appear in a new light to us after a visit to X's studio. By notes and observation he had prepared to set out on canvas a *composition* of elements he had seen at different times and in different places. He used nature to suit his own purposes. Instead of reproducing nature he seemed to make something new of it. We had almost gotten away from the confusion about observation, that is

about looking at pictures. Now we find ourselves in a new perplexity. What does art have to do with anything? It is not a copy of anything, or is it? What is it good for? All of the time I do not know the answers. I have heard answers, but I feel that my students may find better ones. The only thing I can think to suggest now is, let us each take a reproduction and live with it for a while and see what we think about its value to us. Bill takes an *Annunciation* by Lippi and Dorothy takes a Van Gogh landscape . . . Jim takes a Daumier lithograph and Marjorie says she does not think she would like having a Picasso around, but she will give it a chance. We all go back to our trips to galleries and our observation and our individual reading. On our trips Bill begins to teach the rest of us about perspective. Marjorie asks us to help her understand Murger's *Bohemians*. She is actually reading about Whistler now. Dorothy's study of color is fast coming to focus on the Impressionists, and she is planning to give us a slide talk. Jim says that lines are static, nervous, calm, sensuous, fussy, brutal, tender, keen, deft. We have certainly more than just begun our study!

I am afraid this note is getting rather long. We really have not gotten much further than December. Each of us is letting his picture sink in. I have not found time to do any *teaching*. I am very busy just keeping up with everyone.

A CURRICULUM BULLETIN FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

By CECILIA U. STUART
Pennsylvania State Department of
Education

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction has recently issued a bulletin entitled, "Suggestions for the Development and Use of Curriculum Materials in the Elementary School." This Bulletin has been carefully prepared for the use of elementary school teachers, supervisors, and administrators in Pennsylvania, and for every prospective elementary teacher who is a student in one of our State Teachers Colleges, as well. To make the most effective and widespread use of this new publication, it is suggested that in some localities the teachers may find it profitable to form groups to study and discuss the different sections of the Bulletin.

For some time it has been the policy of the Department of Public Instruction to encourage local communities to choose and develop their own curriculum materials. The reasons for this policy are obvious. The teachers, administrators, and supervisors who have a day by day contact with the community and with the boys and girls living there, are in the best position to learn about inherent needs and possibilities of education. Also, when the curriculum materials are thus selected and developed, there is much more certainty that they will be understood by those who will use them. The function of the Department is to offer guidance needed by

communities in the formulation of their own programs of curriculum development. The new Bulletin is designed to aid in the fulfillment of this function. It points also to a type of study on the part of the teacher and supervisor which should result in a continuous revision and refinement of the course of study now in use.

The Bulletin is divided into six main parts, namely:

- (1) Characteristics of a Vitalized Program of Elementary Education.
- (2) Basic Considerations for Elementary Education.
- (3) Selection and Organization of Curriculum Materials in Guiding Children's Learning.
- (4) The Use of Group Discussion and School Journeys.
- (5) Suggestive Type Units.
- (6) Bibliography on Curriculum and General Methods.

A brief survey of these chapters reveals the kinds of suggestions which are made. The first two sections aid in developing a point of view basic to the effective development and use of materials of instruction. Such questions as the following are answered: (1) What are the characteristics of a vitalized program of elementary education? (2) What is education? and (3) What are the purposes of education?

The third, or main section of this study, offers guidance to teachers in evaluating the selection of curriculum materials and their organization into instructional units. There is growing at a rapidly increasing rate a vast body of curriculum materials—a wide range of books, pamphlets, lesson units, courses of study, and the like—which suggest

potential content also for the teacher-in-preparation. This means, among other things, the selection of those wider experiences and contacts which will enable him, in turn, both to select and to enrich the materials in ways appropriate to the children he will teach. As a basis for this kind of evaluation, essential concepts necessary to the formulation of guiding principles are submitted as being among the most important "meanings and understandings" to be considered. Essential meanings and understandings are suggested basic to evaluating (1) fundamental principles governing effective teaching-learning experiences; (2) curriculum materials in relation to the principles of good teaching; (3) a study of the pupil group to be taught as a first factor conditioning the use of curriculum materials; (4) curriculum materials in relation to goals and purposes; (5) the selection and validation of curriculum materials; (6) the use of curriculum materials in the organization of instructional units for group and individual development; and (7) the use of curriculum materials in the evaluation of pupil progress and in determining evidences of growth.

Part four offers suggestions for procedures in guiding children in group discussion and in school journey activities. Many teachers who have asked how to guide a group discussion or a school journey so that it may be a real educative experience will be interested in this section of the Bulletin.

In part five are illustrations of units of experience. One unit illustrates in detail the teacher's planning of an integrated unit of learn-

ing. The other is an account of a unit as it developed with a specific group of children. As stated in the Bulletin, "The unit method requires a preparation and planning that cannot be standardized and stereotyped." These samples are offered as guides to stimulate and suggest ideas to teachers in their own organization and use of curriculum materials, rather than as samples of procedures to be followed implicitly.

The bibliography on curriculum and general method at the end of the Bulletin will answer the need of curriculum study groups and of teachers who are especially interested.

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YOUTH ADDRESSES THE TEACHER

The following address was given at the Commencement Exercises, May 28, of the Lincoln School of Teachers College, New York, by Donald Barr, a member of the graduating class:

We who are leaving Lincoln School have a few words to say to you—our parents and our teachers.

We want to apologize for all the things we have done or neglected to do which have hurt you. We ask forgiveness for all the ingratitude we have shown and the cruelty of heedlessness. We thank you for your gifts of affection and your kindness. We thank you most for the skill and perseverance with which you have trained us to face the world.

But for the world you have given us to face we cannot thank you.

You have tried, in teaching us here, to make us citizens of the

world as well as of a city or a nation. That was a difficult and dangerous thing for you to do, and we admire your courage. But perhaps you will admit that it will require some courage on our part to accept citizenship in the world as it is today.

We are not dissatisfied with the training you have given us; we are dissatisfied with the result of the training given you. This is only natural. No generation likes the world which it enters, and every generation wants to change it. Class after class has graduated from school with just that ideal of bettering the world, full of firm resolve to improve and change.

Yet with all the changes they were going to make—all the evils they were going to extirpate—after all that fine display of courage—what now?

Now, the successes and the failures of the training given the last generation are coming down to children of our age as bombs upon Madrid. And we, whose education has perhaps been more successful, are going out into the world full of firm resolve to improve and change.

But there is a difference between us and our forefathers. They went out to change the world, and the world changed them. They and their ideas were absorbed, and the fundamental problems remained.

These problems are left for us to solve. The professions which we want to enter are overcrowded. We will not be able to get jobs. There is surely work to be done, yet somehow, we may not do it, and somehow there is no room for us.

These are the things we must change. By their very nature, we

cannot escape them as our forefathers did. Because of them the world cannot absorb us. But let that be our challenge to the world. If there are no jobs for us, then we have a bigger job ahead of us.

You have tried to educate us to do this job. You have tried to teach us how to run the world. But this is something that you are not qualified to teach. You have failed this subject. You have ruled the world side by side with wars and pestilence. Your law has been anarchy, your old order, only disorder.

You cannot teach us to rule, but there is something you have given us as students that we will not forget. You tried to teach us to direct our energies and our activities. You cannot blame us if we follow your

teachings. We would direct the energies and the activities of the world.

We will transform chaos to planning.

Do not think that this resolve is the empty conceit of youth. Something has happened to us. A new feeling has grown in us. It grows in every generation at our time of life, but this time it has been nurtured by the facts we have to face. We used to look to you so eagerly, for you were so old and strong, and we were so young and helpless. And now we dare to think that you are old and helpless, and we are young and strong.

We who are about to live, salute you!



REVIEWS

WYNNE, JOHN P. *The Teacher and the Curriculum*. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1937. 440 p.

As might be expected from the title of this book, the treatment of curriculum problems is viewed from the standpoint of the teacher. While the newer texts on curriculum have shown definite trends toward the interrelation of the curriculum with teaching method and the more immediate problems of teaching, this text represents to date the most extreme expression of that point of view. The logical outgrowth of the newer concepts of education and learning, as well as the present somewhat general acceptance of *curriculum* and *experience* as essentially synonymous terms, foreshadows increased emphasis upon the interdependence of curriculum and method. Inasmuch as the author approaches curriculum problems from the point of view of the teacher, he has tended somewhat naturally to overstress the teaching situation and understress or entirely omit consideration of important phases of the larger aspects of curriculum construction.

The author accepts the newer concept of the *curriculum* as *experience* and is fundamentally sound in his insistence that "the teacher is a curriculum maker." Throughout the book this point of view has influenced the scope and treatment of the subject. The stress placed upon *aims*, particularly, from the point of view of the teacher, deserves careful reading by every teacher. Part I, Basic Principles, and Part II, The

Course of Instruction, including upwards of one-half of the book, are devoted largely to a consideration of aims and content. Part III, Methods in Teaching, including ten chapters, stresses the various aspects of the unit in organization and teaching method. Nowhere in the literature on the curriculum will one find a text as general in scope devoting so much space to the *unit*. In spite of the extensive treatment given the *unit* here, the teacher and curriculum worker will do well to consult some of the more recent general texts on the curriculum for comparison of definition and discussion. Part IV, Evaluation of Teaching and Curriculum Making, represents something of the usual discussion of measurement problems.

The point of view of the author is progressive though not extreme. The book will have its greatest value for teachers as supplemental to one of the more general texts on the curriculum.

NELSON L. BOSSING
University of Oregon

MUSKINGUM COLLEGE FACULTY—
A College Looks at Its Program.
New Concord, Ohio: Muskingum
College, 1937. P. x + 322.

This book is an unusually clear illustration of both the great advantages and the deplorable limitations in the prevalent methods of research as a basis for improving educational policies.

In admirably outlined, summarized, concrete style the book presents twenty-four studies made by the president and fifteen faculty members of Muskingum College since 1930 and four explanatory analyses of these studies by the dean. The studies concern comparisons of conference, lecture-discussion, and lecture-written-response methods; class size; effects of high-school preparation in chemistry; a test of voice improvement; the validity of tests of writing achievement and of musical talent; lists of objectives for the social studies, biology, speech, and freshman English; requirements for elementary-teacher education; environment for training in composition; promoting and testing character; the work of the dean of women; residence distribution of the eight hundred Muskingum students; appraisal and standardization of grading practice; and a cooperative effort of faculty and students to improve social regulations.

Many of these studies—especially the last four kinds above—seem to be not only carefully and soundly done but also helpfully suggestive to outsiders. Furthermore, as the Muskingum faculty-members have made these definite statements and appraisals of their objectives or methods, they have admittedly put increased effort into improving their work and cooperating among themselves and with administrators, advisers, and students. Such a result was one of the initial objectives and would be, of course, of first importance to any college. Muskingum deserves congratulations.

Yet, the major aim of Muskingum College is avowedly the develop-

ment of Christian character. To what extent does this study program indicate how closely that aim is being or might be achieved? Such an objective requires a curriculum emphasizing the study of how broad, humanitarian ideals can be attained and methods based upon the genuine, continuing interests of the individual student. Most so-called progressive education recognizes these needs. The Muskingum studies (not their stated purposes) have almost completely ignored them. The only emphasis upon Christian idealism in the studies themselves seems to be in connection with objectives in teaching speech! No attempt whatever is made to test methods which encourage the student to study, under guidance and suggestion, really and continuously upon his own initiative.

If the admirable energy of the Muskingum faculty in studying its program could be directed chiefly to studying how its avowed aim can be achieved, how incomparably more valuable would be the results! The trouble to date seems to lie in the effort to be "scientific"—and, therefore, to concentrate upon narrow or obviously tangible problems. A concrete suggestion which may help is that Muskingum add to its advisers, for instance, the president of Sarah Lawrence College who has had outstanding success with truly vital methods and Professor Ernest Johnson of its own Federal Council of Churches who has won wide repute for his knowledge of education for social idealism.

MOWAT G. FRASER

University of Michigan

BRUNNER, EDMUND DES., AND LORGE, IRVING—*Rural Trends in Depression Years*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1937. 387 p.

"So far as the writers know, this is the first time in rural social research that a nation-wide sample of communities has been thrice visited and studied," say the authors of this book. Two purposes are indicated, (1) to present results of a study of changes in rural social life in the United States between 1930 and 1936, and (2) to trace the life story of 140 village-centered agricultural communities through another, or third phase of their development, so that it may be studied in relation to the phases revealed by two earlier surveys of the same villages.

This is a report of the third survey, under the same director, of 140 rural centers. The first study was made in 1923-24, the second in 1929-30, and the third in 1936. The first two studies were made under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, while chief cooperating agencies in the third survey were the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Columbia University Council for Research in the Social Sciences.

Rural social trends are discussed mainly under these topics: basic changes and adjustments in agriculture from 1930 to 1935; analyses of changes in population, in community organization, and in relations of village to country; changes in institutions such as those of trade, industry, banking, education,

religion, and social life; and problems of relief.

Among the major rural trends noted which have special significance for education are: increase in number of farms and in total farm population; increase of taxes in proportion to value of land; increase in population of rural villages; improvement in village-country relations, and decline of rural neighborhoods; high turnover among social organizations; increased participation of government in the commercial and social life of local communities; decrease in membership of local social organizations; decline in number of churches and in church attendance, but increase in members per church; decrease in church support; wide extension of relief in rural communities.

Trends in conditions of rural schools during the depression include: great curtailment of educational expenditures, and of educational opportunities; decrease in number of open-country schools; increased proportion of farm children in attendance at village schools; expansion of village school plants with government aid; increase in state aid to education; decline in teachers' salaries and in teaching costs; improvement of teachers' qualifications; increase in school enrollment, particularly in the secondary school.

With regard to the curriculum, during the depression rural schools have shown increased emphasis upon the social sciences; there are trends toward an increase in commercial and agricultural education, a beginning of guidance and mental adjustment, a decline in teaching of

ancient languages; there is an increase in the practice of combining separate subjects in "broad fields," such as social studies and science. Other trends include: extension of the high school offerings to post-graduates; growing interest in the school's relation and contribution to the community and its life, and in the use of school facilities for community activities; and extension of adult education facilities, both

through agricultural extension, and the schools.

Brunner and Lorge have done for students of rural life what the Lynds did for students of the small industrial city in their book, *Middletown in Transition*. *Rural Trends in Depression Years* indicates crucial problems which should provide a large part of the basis upon which the curriculum of the rural school is built.

J. E. D.



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